

# READ ME FIRST

*Please read this carefully. You will be asked to confirm that you have read these instructions to register at the application portal.*

Prospective Academy Nominee:

On behalf of Senator Michael Bennet, congratulations on your decision to apply for a nomination to attend one of our outstanding service academies.

Each year hundreds of exceptional young men and women from around Colorado apply for a nomination to the Air Force Academy, West Point, Annapolis, and/or the Merchant Marine Academy. The Coast Guard Academy does not use congressional nominations as part of their application process.

Due to the large number of applicants seeking nominations from Senator Bennet, and the very limited staff capacity available, it is a tremendous help if you can provide information and documentation in the format requested.

REMEMBER: There are TWO parts involved in getting admitted to an academy. You must receive a nomination AND you must apply directly to, and be accepted by, the academy of interest. If you were to, for example, apply to Senator Bennet for a nomination to West Point, but you never contacted the admissions office at West Point, you would not be appointed, even if you got a nomination.

**You must complete, fully and carefully, BOTH the application to our office AND to the academies of interest.**

The general instructions found here can be used to guide you through sign up and final submission on our Application Web Portal. If you have previously applied to Senator Bennet for a nomination, you may note some changes in the process this year. Please follow the current instructions on how to apply.

**Getting started early will ensure you have all documents submitted before our September 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.**

Once registered, you will be able to supply a variety of information, upload needed documents and change information prior to submitting your final application. If you are not sure what to do to get started, *please give us a call*. It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that you submit a full and correct application, and we are here to work with you every step of the way.

Only completed applications will be considered for a nomination.

Please read these instructions carefully!

The direct link to the on-line application is found on the last page of this document

***Hal Bidlack, Ph.D., Lt Col, USAF (Ret.)***

Academy Nominations Coordinator

Pikes Peak Office/409 N. Tejon St., Suite 107, Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
719-328-1100 ph 719-328-1129 fax academy\_nominations@bennet.senate.gov

## The Application How To's:

- The on-line application will consist of two parts: a Questionnaire, where you will answer questions, and a Checklist, that will both tell you what documents are needed and allow you to upload those documents.
- ALL uploaded documents must be in pdf format. Non-pdf documents will not be accepted. Please Do NOT upload your letters in tiff or bmp or *any* other format – only pdf! If this requirement is prohibitive *please give us a call*.

### Picture:

Please submit a picture in pdf format. Do NOT submit photos that are part of Word documents or in any other formats, only pdf! Please ensure your photo is reasonably small (roughly 3 inch by 3 inch); 5 meg picture files are very cumbersome.

### Letters of Recommendation:

As your letters of recommendation will need to come from outside sources, you should begin working immediately with those who will be supporting you. We have found that the letters often seem to be the very last item applicants wait on before final submission.

- One letter of the three must come from a teacher, counsellor, or principal. It does *not* have to be a teacher, counsellor, or principal you have right now – it can be someone from a previous school year,
- Your letters of recommendation MUST be signed. In previous years an unfortunate number of letters of recommendation arrived either unsigned or as simple text emails. Your letters of recommendation MUST be *actually signed by the writer*. This means you may have to nag some of your letter writers to be on time – letters that arrive just before the deadline but are unsigned will not help you.
- Please have your writer put the recommendation on *the letterhead of their organization*. Note: There may be some individuals, such as retired teachers or coaches, who are sending letters on personal letterhead. That is fine.
- Please provide your letter writers with the guidance page attached to the end of these instructions. This will help them craft the best possible letter of support.
- We ask for only three letters. The application includes a place to provide the name and relationship of each of your letter writers. If we receive more than three letters, we will refer to your application for which letters we should use.
- Letter writers can provide you the letter to upload with your application or email/mail the letter directly to us (see instructions on letter of recommendation page).

### Uploading of files:

- You MUST ensure that each required document is individually uploaded to the proper location on the website:
  - One Photo
  - Three letters of recommendation (unless writer sends directly to the office.)
    - You must upload each letter *separately*; please don't scan all three letters into a single pdf and upload.
  - You are NOT required to upload a copy of your ACT/SAT scores; you simply report the scores you got in the application at the appropriate place.
  - You are NOT required to provide a transcript.
- Naming of uploaded documents:
  - Please use the following naming system for all documents:
    - Picture: Smith, Jane Picture
    - Letters of Recommendation (LORs): Your name LOR Name of Writer

*Example:* Bill Jones writing a letter recommending Jane Smith would be named: Smith, Jane LOR Jones, Bill

- **Communicating with our Office:**

Please be sure to put your full name and home city on all emails or letters you send to our office. Unfortunately, we have received emails from some applicants who just signed the email with their first name, and we were not sure from whom they came.

- **Interviews:**

- Those selected for interviews will be notified by email sometime after 15 September 2014.
- Please make sure that on the application you provide us with an email address that you check regularly.
- You will then be given instructions on how to access our on-line calendar to select an interview time, in the city you select in the application.

## Service Academy Nominations Letter of Recommendation

### US Senator Michael F. Bennet

*Please provide a copy of this instruction page to each of your letter writers.*

**Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE DUE:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Guidance to Letter Writers:

Thank you for helping Senator Bennet select candidates to be our nation's future military leaders. Your input on behalf of an applicant is a vital part of the selection process. As there are hundreds of academy nomination applicants each year, it is important that your letters be as effective as possible.

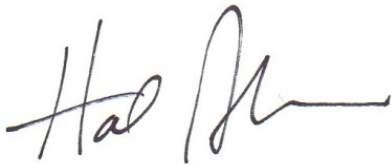
- To be the most helpful, please focus on the character and leadership characteristics of the young person you are writing about.
- It is best to avoid simply listing the young person's achievements, as those activities will be documented elsewhere in the application.
- The strongest letters of recommendation help Senator Bennet understand why this person would be an exceptional military officer and leader.
- It is very important that the letters be both on the appropriate letterhead, and physically signed. If you do not currently have letterhead (e.g., retired) please indicate that in your letter.

#### How to get the Letter to us:

- **Give to the Applicant:** It is acceptable to give your letter to the applicant to submit with their application. Your letter does not need to be sealed and sent directly from you, the writer, to our office.
- or
- **Send Directly to the Office by Email or Mail:** Please include the full name of the student you are supporting either in an email or in your letter itself. If sending by email, please attach as a pdf file, after you have signed the letter. We will also accept letters by mail.

If you have any questions about our process or your letter, please feel free to contact me.

Kind Regards,



***Hal Bidlack, Ph.D., Lt Col, USAF (Ret.)***

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academy\_nominations@bennet.senate.gov

**PS: DON'T FORGET TO SIGN YOUR LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION!**

Click [HERE](#) to connect with the on-line nomination form

If link does not work, go to:

<https://oar.senate.gov/index.cfm?go=showLogin&applicationUUID=5B0E0564-1321-0E2B-0E52F07C8D93DB2B>

Good luck!

